United Nations ST/IC/2001/42

Secretariat

13 June 2001

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2001 competitive examinations for French-language translators/ précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take one or more of the following competitive examinations in 2001, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998:

(a) Competitive examination for French-language translators/précis-writers;

(b) Competitive examination for French-language editors; and

(c) Competitive examination for French-language verbatim reporters.

2. The competitive examinations for French-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters will be held on 10, 11 and 12 September 2001, respectively, in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of these examinations is to establish rosters from which present and future vacancies for French-language translators/précis-writers, editors or verbatim reporters will be filled. When a vacancy occurs, successful candidates will be recruited from the rosters, subject to the requirements of the services in terms of expertise and language combinations.

3. The examinations are open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or to special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of these examinations. Such candidates, if successful in one or more of the examinations, will be offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards. Staff members who are successful and are selected for inclusion in one or more of the rosters will be

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assigned to fill vacancies for French-language posts as they occur in the language services in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and Bangkok. Assignments are subject to rotation and successful candidates may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations in Africa, Asia or Europe or at Headquarters according to the needs of the Organization. Successful candidates are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in language posts. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 12 to 16 below.

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have French as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of French and an excellent knowledge of English and one of the other official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish). The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should attach to their application either a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) As an exception, for staff members who hold a university degree in law (preferably in criminal law) and who are applying for the competitive examination for translators/précis-writers, the requirement of an additional official language may be waived by the Board of Examiners. In such cases, the candidates would be required to select the legal text as one of the two specialized texts to be chosen under paragraph 7 (b) below; however, in addition to the legal text mentioned in that paragraph, they will be required to translate another legal text during the time period allotted to the second language paper;

(d) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which French is the language of instruction or hold a university degree from a recognized school of translation.

5. The requirement of a degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status mentioned in paragraph 4 (d) may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is French, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to French as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

6. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final**.

7. The written examination for translation/précis-writing, to be held on 10 September 2001, will consist of four papers:

(a) Translation into French of a general text in English (two and one-half hours, morning of 10 September 2001). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Translation into French of one text chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts, one in each of the official United Nations languages other than French and English (one and one-half hours, morning of 10 September 2001);

(c) Summary in French of a text in English (one and one-half hours, afternoon of 10 September 2001); and

(d) Translation into French of one English text to be chosen by the candidate from a total of three specialized texts (economic, legal and scientific/technical) (one and one-half hours, afternoon of 10 September 2001).

8. The written editing examination, to be held on 11 September 2001, will consist of four papers:

(a) Editing of a French text (two hours, morning of 11 September 2001). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Editing of a French text to bring it into line with a text edited in English (one and one-half hours, morning of 11 September 2001);

(c) Translation into French of one text chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts, one in each of the official United Nations languages other than French and English (one and one-half hours, afternoon of 11 September 2001); and

(d) Summary of a French text (one and one-half hours, afternoon of 11 September 2001).

9. The written verbatim reporting examination, to be held on 12 September 2001, will consist of three papers:

(a) Bringing the French version of a text into line with the original English (two hours, morning of 12 September 2001);

(b) Bringing the French version of a text into line with the original Spanish or Russian (one hour, morning of 12 September 2001); and

(c) Editing of and making the necessary logical and stylistic corrections to an original French text (two hours, afternoon of 12 September 2001).

10. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will **not** be permitted during the examination. Similarly, candidates may not use personal computers to prepare their papers.

11. On the basis of the results of each written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview. The Board will interview

each candidate to assess general knowledge, professional experience and knowledge of the United Nations and current events. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview **should not** assume that they will automatically be offered an assignment.

12. On the basis of the overall results of each examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the respective roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual scores or results. When a vacancy occurs, successful candidates will be recruited from the roster in overall ranking order, subject to the requirements of the services in terms of expertise and language combinations. Candidates appointed to a function who have been successful in more than one examination will be eligible to transfer at a later stage to a different function for which they have also passed the examination.

13. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as French-language translators/précis-writers, editors or verbatim reporters for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels. During the trial period, following on-the-job training if necessary, successful candidates should be prepared to use a computer workstation and to operate a dictaphone. In addition, in order to be confirmed as an editor or verbatim reporter, successful candidates will need to have word-processing skills or to acquire them following on-the-job training during the two-year trial period.

14. Successful candidates assigned directly to duty stations away from Headquarters will normally be required to spend the first six months of their trial period in the corresponding service at Headquarters.

15. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their functions at the P-3 level. Staff members on fixed-term appointment will be eligible to be considered for permanent appointment subject to the requirements of the staff rules in force. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

16. In accordance with the needs of the service/section, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

17. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, not later than **31 July 2001**, to:

2001 Competitive Examinations for French-language Translators/Précis-Writers, Editors and Verbatim Reporters
Examinations and Tests Section
Specialist Services Division
Office for Human Resources Management
Room S-2575-E
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax No.: (1-212) 963-3683

Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered.

18. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications to the Specialist Services Division of the Office of Human Resources Management through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations by 31 July 2001, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division.

Application[a]

2001 competitive examinations for French-language translators/ précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters

Index No.[b] ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Last name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Category ☐☐ Level ☐☐

First name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of entry on duty Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐☐☐

Type of contract _____ Expiration date _____

Department/office[c] _____ Duty station _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax extension _____ E-mail _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

If yes, which examination(s) _____

What is your main language?[d] ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

A. Knowledge of other languages[e]

Language(s)	*United Nations language programme (indicate highest level and date)*	*Courses taken at other institutions (name and location)*

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	*Read*		*Understand*		*Speak*		*Write*	
	Easily	*Not easily*	*Easily*	*Not easily*	*Fluently*	*Not fluently*	*Easily*	*Not easily*

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications

Name of institution[f] (include place and country)	*Language of instruction*	*Attended (month/year)*		*Degree or equivalent[f]*	*Main field of study*
		From	*To*		

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution[f] (include place and country)	*Language of instruction*	*Attended (month/year)*		*Certificate or equivalent[f]*	*Main field of study*
		From	*To*		

E. Describe work experience (giving dates and length of time) in translation/précis-writing, editing, verbatim reporting or related fields, if any.

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F. Please indicate the examination(s) for which you are applying. Your application will not be considered if this part of the application is not completed.

☐ (a) The competitive examination for French-language translators/ précis-writers;

☐ (b) The competitive examination for French-language editors;

☐ (c) The competitive examination for French-language verbatim reporters.

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date _____ Signature _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/2001/42 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2001 competitive examination for French-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as a French-language translator/précis-writer, editor or verbatim reporter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 12 to 16 of that circular.

Date _____ Signature _____

Notes

[a] Staff members applying for these examinations **must complete this application form**. In addition, staff members **must attach** written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which French is the principal language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless the staff member was convoked for the G-to-P examination for promotion to the Professional category or for another language examination. Applications that are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member for completion and resubmission **by the deadline for receipt of applications** in the Specialist Services Division. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division will **not** be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications on time.

[b] Normally appears on your grounds pass, monthly salary statement and personnel action (P.5) forms. If not, please contact your Human Resources Officer to obtain your number.

[c] Staff members should indicate the department or office to which they are currently assigned, e.g., DGAACS, ECE, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNOV or other (please specify).

[d] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to French as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

[e] Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 (b) above.

[f] Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.